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ABSTRACT

The American Library Association's policy cn federal legislatien is based on its objectives of promoting and improving library service and librarianship. Representing those who use libraries as well as those who operate them, the Association is a source of information on libraries and information services for those concerned with formulating and implementing federal legislation. Legislative action is considered especially pertinent in the following four areas: (1) Direct support of library services which includes national library networks, telecommunications, federal aid to educatien and libraries, school library media centers, career education, public libraries, service to the handicapped and institutionalized, and federal libraries; (2) Indirect suppcrt cf library services including research in information science, postal rates, copyright, and taxation; (3) Intellectual freedom; (4) International programs such as Unesco, the Crganization of American States, U.S. libraries abroad, international copyright and international postal policy. Included is a listing of laws affecting librarians, libraries and their users. (Author/DH)

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FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE POLICY

of the

AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

LI 004 351

Adopted by the

American Library Association Council January 1973

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Preface

The American Library Association, founded in 1876, is the oldest and largest national library association in the world. Its concern spans all types of libraries: state, public, school and academic libraries, special libraries serving persons in government, commerce and industry, the arts, the armed services, hospitals, prisons, and other institutions. With a membership of libraries, librarians, library trustees and other interested persons from every state and many countries of the world, the Association is the chief spokesman for the people of the United States in their search for the highest quality of library and information services. The Association maintains a close working relationship with more than seventy other library associations in the United States, Canada, and other countries, and it works closely with many other organizations concerned with education, research, cultural development, recreation, and public service.

To facilitate library cooperation at all levels of government and to assist in interpreting library needs to the Congress, to federal and state executive agencies, and to the people of the United States, the Association maintains an office in Washington, D.C., in addition to its headquarters in Chicago. The American Library Association is the only nongovernmental organization at the nation level representing all types of library and information services.

American Library Association Objectives

The primary objective of the American Library Association is to promote library service of excellent quality freely available to all. Because access to information and knowledge is and increasingly will be of critical importance to survival in today's rapidly changing society and is essential for self-fulfillment and the development of a more peaceful and prosperous world, the American Library Association has established the following major goals for the future:

1. The provision of public library service that will enable the public library to be a strong educational force to help every American fulfill his obligations as an informed citizen and achieve full self-development.

2. The provision in all educational institutions of library collections, services, and facilities fully adequate to support their programs of instruction and research and to stimulate a lively and continuing interest on the part of the student in reading and self-education.

3. Provision for rich collections to support research in all institutions or agencies so engaged, together with the establishment of a network among libraries to make available to all citizens the full range of their resources.

4. The development of a library profession adequate in numbers, education, training, and personality to provide in all libraries service of the high quality needed.

5. Increased support for and development of an active and extensive program of research, experimentation, demonstration, and evaluation in all fields of librarianship.

6. Continued efforts to secure and retain the commitment of all concerned with libraries to the principles of the *Library Bill of Rights* and the *Freedom to Read Statement* and to in-

form all people of the positions enunciated in these documents.

7. Increased participation in the development of libraries and librarianship throughout the world.

8. Mounting a vigorous and continuing program of public relations to make the American public increasingly aware of the contributions libraries make to society and to further local, regional, and national programs of library service.

9. A publishing program responsive to the needs, concern, and goals of the library profession and the American Library Association. —Adopted by ALA Council, 30 June 1967.

A re-examination of American Library Association objectives during 1970-71 led to the establishment of the following priorities: social responsibilities; manpower; intellectual freedom; legislation; planning, research, and development; and democratization and reorganization of the Association.

Federal Legislative Policy

The role of libraries in the well-being of the nation and its people has been recognized by the Congress of the United States both in the declaration of legislative policy and by financial support. Federal legislation has responded to the need of Americans of all ages, interests, and socioeconomic conditions for access to a wide range of knowledge through a variety of communications media.

The Association's policy on federal legislation is based on its objectives of promoting and improving library service and librarianship. Representing those who use libraries as well as those who operate them, the Association is a source of information on libraries and information services for those concerned with formulating and implementing federal legislation. Legislative action is considered especially pertinent in the areas described on the following pages.

1 DIRECT SUPPORT OF LIBRARY SERVICES

National Commission on Libraries and Information Science

Achievement of the objectives of the American Library Association calls for formulation of a national policy, enunciated by the President and enacted into law by the Congress, which affirms that the American people be provided with library and information services adequate to their needs and that the federal government, in collaboration with state and local governments and private agencies, exercise leadership in assuring the provision of such services. The Association welcomes the establishment of the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science as the central agency for national library planning and urges that the Commission be fully funded.

National Library Networks

The wide dispersion of population, rising levels of education, and the expanding volume of information, make increasingly difficult the rapid delivery of information to the citizen who needs it. The concept of the local library as possessor and purveyor of *all* needed information is obsolete. A national library network is needed through which all types of libraries, scattered across the nation, can cooperate in sharing resources. The tremendous task of providing such a network to serve all Americans requires central planning and coordination of effort. It also requires federal funding.

Examples of interlibrary cooperation might include the designation, development, and funding of national and regional library resource centers, the creation of inter-institutional catalogs, the formation of computer networks that will permit electronic transmission of bibliographic and other information (including that which is available in computerized data banks), and the joint operation of other communications facilities. Such activities are conceived as part of a systematic and

coordinated program to expand America's existing library resources and make them more accessible. The Networks for Knowledge title of the Higher Education Act should be funded. If sufficient funding is obtained it should greatly accelerate the effort of libraries to form networks for sharing resources and services.

Telecommunications

The American Library Association supports legislation that will broaden the availability of communications devices for educational purposes. In particular, it urges that libraries be recognized as prime potential users of satellite, microwave, cable communication and other means of information transmission which allow the linking together of libraries and users, as well as the forming of interlibrary networks. Easy and inexpensive availability of such linkages will help libraries to share resources and to carry out their mission of delivering service to all the people — wherever they may live and whatever their needs may be.

Federal Aid to Education and Libraries

Comprehensive federal aid to public education is needed to support the states and their subdivisions in establishing and maintaining adequate educational services and facilities and in equalizing educational opportunities. The success of federal programs of categorical aid to education clearly demonstrates the contribution the federal government can make to promoting broadened educational opportunities for all. Libraries across the nation — public, school and college — can continue to benefit from federal grants specifically directed to their needs, and, at the same time, participate in federal revenue sharing programs.

School Library Media Centers

The school library media center is an integral part of the school, supporting every aspect of the curriculum. Effective teaching and learning rely upon well-stocked school libraries, staffed by library media specialists. The federal government's recognition of the school library's contribution to the educational and cultural growth of children and young people, including the disadvantaged, is evidenced by such laws as the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the National Defense Education Act, and the Higher Education Act.

The Association supports increased federal funds for professional library personnel and supportive staff in individual schools, in school systems, and at the state level; adequate collections of library books and other educational media; and facilities that will stimulate and strengthen school library services required in programs of quality education.

Career Education

The need for technically trained workers in many fields of business, industry, and government has led to expanded state and federal funding of programs in vocational and technical education at elementary, high school, and junior college levels. A serious lack of adequate library resources — books, periodicals, and audio-visual materials — for both existing and proposed programs, has led the Association to endorse federal legislation for career education that includes support for libraries.

College and Research Libraries

As a vital part of higher education, library resources and services must be strengthened and expanded to meet the increases in student enrollment and to support new and changing programs of instruction and research. Increased support of university, college, and

junior college libraries must be a part of increased funding of higher education. Any federal legislation which stimulates new or expanded educational programs should provide sufficient additional funds to meet the library material and personnel needs required for the success of these programs.

Substantial financial aid is needed by libraries in the nation's developing institutions if they are to overcome the many years in which they received little or no financial aid to support their educational programs. At the same time, major research libraries of the country need substantial financial aid if they are to continue to acquire the vast product of worldwide scholarship and make it available beyond their own academic communities.

Funds for library materials and personnel, federal scholarship and loans, special grants, research grants and contracts, assistance in building programs, and tax exemptions for educational institutions benefit the nation by improving the quality of higher education. The Higher Education Act has contributed immeasurably to the improvement of higher education by providing funds for library resources and facilities.

Public Libraries

Public libraries are essential components of our total educational structure and are of social, educational, cultural, and economic benefit to citizens of all ages in every community. Their services and resources must be strengthened and expanded to meet growing needs of a diverse population for information, understanding, and self-realization.

Increased federal assistance is needed to strengthen basic library resources, both material and staff; to develop strong library systems; and to provide for adequate library facilities. Additional funding is needed to stimulate and assist public libraries in developing new programs and services that will help in meeting critical social and educational needs.

Particularly critical is the need to bolster public library services in those urban areas where local tax income has dwindled while the educational needs of the residents have increased.

The Association also supports the inclusion of the public library in federal legislation designed to create or strengthen community services and programs of a social and educational nature, including expansion of the library's role as a community information center designed to serve the special information needs of all members of the community.

State Library Agencies

State library agencies are central to the development of effective library services in a state. They are responsible for statewide library planning that provides for state support, for the effective administration and use of federal funds and for coordinated library development. They undergird and backstop the resources and services of other libraries in the states, and provide for services to state government, institutions, and special groups.

The Association supports federal legislation that will provide staff and material resources to state library agencies to enable them to discharge these responsibilities effectively.

Service to the Disadvantaged

High among the Association's priorities is support of federal legislation that would help to redress the national imbalance in educational opportunities. The Association is committed to the provision of easier access to good libraries for those persons who are disadvantaged by reason of cultural, educational, or economic factors, or lack of mobility. Special library services and materials are needed by the aged, the disabled, those with learning difficulties, and those with limited skills in English, in order that they may claim their full share in

our national life. The Association endorses the principles enunciated by the Right to Read program and urges that the necessary library resources be provided for the fulfillment of this right.

Service to the Blind and Handicapped

Substantial progress has been made in developing specialized library service to the blind and to the physically handicapped. The Association supports programs that will strengthen and expand library service not only to these persons but to all persons with reading handicaps. It encourages adequate financial aid from federal, state, and local sources to enable libraries to offer these specialized services.

Service to Persons in Institutions

The Association advocates the provision of good library service including access to information for residents and staffs of correctional institutions, mental and general hospitals, nursing and medical schools, orphanages, and schools for the handicapped. Adequate financial support for these services should be provided through a federal-state-local partnership

Federal Library Services

Library of Congress. The Library of Congress is the foundation upon which any program of national library service must rest. In addition to serving Congress, it performs more national library functions than does any other library in the world. These functions are vital to the library and research communities of the nation. Accordingly, the Association recommends that the Library of Congress be designated by Congress as the National Library.

The Association supports the improvement and extension of the present services of the Library of Congress and urges the Congress to provide adequate funding for an expanded pro-

gram. The Association recommends that the Library of Congress undertake additional research programs in innovative library techniques and services and assume a greater leadership role in the development of national library resources, in the acquisition of foreign materials, in the provision of cataloging information, in the preservation of library materials and in the utilization of new technological advances in library and information science. The Association supports full implementation of the centralized cataloging services of the Library of Congress authorized under its National Program for Acquisition and Cataloging.

Other Federal Libraries. The National Agricultural Library and the National Library of Medicine are also recognized as having national responsibility for collecting, organizing, and servicing research materials in their special fields. Libraries in other federal agencies have significant research collections and a considerable measure of national responsibility beyond the agencies they serve. Such federal libraries should receive financial and other support commensurate with these responsibilities.

Along with the Library of Congress, these specialized federal libraries should form part of a national library network serving the informational needs of the nation.

Bibliographic and Reference Services. Catalog card distribution and other bibliographical services of the Library of Congress and other federal libraries and agencies should be improved and expanded. Bibliographies produced by federal government agencies should be given wide distribution through libraries, and hence to the public, without the expense of middlemen. The Association supports the use of libraries as reference centers for providing scientific and technical information to business, industry, and government.

U. S. Office of Education. Adequate educational services and facilities and the equalization of educational opportunities are essential to our national welfare. The Association con-

siders the U. S. Office of Education a primary agency in promoting the improvement of education, and supports a fully developed and coordinated program of library services within the agency. A strong organizational unit within the Office of Education, headed by a deputy commissioner, should review and coordinate all library activities within the Office and exert leadership in planning and implementation.

The U. S. Office of Education should continue to improve its advisory and technical assistance in upgrading library education and the resources, services, and facilities of school, college, university, research, state, special, and public libraries; its preparation of valuable statistical compilations, research reports, and other essential library publications; and its responsible administration of programs of importance to libraries.

Public Access to Federal Documents. The Association supports freedom of public access to information about the federal government and its activities, as recognized in the Freedom of Information Act of 1966. It urges strict enforcement of the provisions of this Act.

Under federal law certain libraries across the nation have been designated as "depository libraries" to receive federal government documents and make them available to the public. The Association supports improvement and extension of the depository system, including provision of material in a variety of formats. Vigorous agency support is needed to include more publications within the system, to establish an advisory and consultative program, and to promote closer liaison with cooperating libraries.

The Association recommends that comprehensive research studies be made of the federal depository library system together with the system of distributing state government publications within each state. The aim of such studies should be to develop a national plan for the distribution of government publications as an integral part of a national library network in order that information be more readily

available to scholars, research workers, and the general citizenry.

2 INDIRECT SUPPORT OF LIBRARY SERVICES

Education of Librarians and Information Specialists

There is a continuing need for librarians, information specialists, and supportive staff who are qualified to carry out library programs in a rapidly changing society. Increased federal funding is imperative to improve the quality of preservice and continuing library education through scholarships, fellowships, and training institutes. Special attention needs to be given to educational programs that focus on the newer media, that recognize changing forms of service, and that consider problems brought about by the rapid proliferation of knowledge.

Research in Library and Information Science

Federal support is needed to support research in library science and information storage and retrieval if libraries are to deal adequately with the "information explosion" and the increased demands for information from industry, government, and educational agencies, as well as from individual citizens. Innovative programs for library service must be developed to meet new needs of library users.

The federal government should encourage the collection and analysis of statistical data on all types of library services. Funding for the National Center for Educational Statistics in the U. S. Office of Education should be adequate to enable the Center to assist state library agencies to participate effectively in a national program of data collection and analysis.

Personnel Policies and Employment Standards

In order to fulfill the library's function of serving as an unbiased, nonpartisan source of in-

formation, the Association supports library personnel programs based on the following: (1) a sound position classification plan; (2) selection and promotion based on competency, with persons chosen for their educational, professional, and personal qualifications, without discrimination against persons in regard to race, color, age, religion, sex, or national origin; (3) well-organized plans for in-service training; (4) salaries and fringe benefits equal to those enjoyed by personnel with comparable qualifications, including vacations, sick leave, and medical insurance; (5) an equitable and adequate pay plan with no discrimination as to sex; (6) flexible and actuarially sound retirement plans; (7) security of intellectual freedom; (8) tenure, with protection against discharge and demotion without adequate cause, fair hearing and adequate appeal procedures; and (9) aggressive recruiting of staff with due regard for strong ethnic group representation.

The Association supports a strong, flexible, and humane federal civil service system. Such a system will not only contribute to quality library service in federal libraries but, through its influence, will help raise standards for libraries throughout the nation.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission should be given strong and broad powers to eliminate discrimination.

Postal Rates

Recognizing that it is in the nation's interest to provide the widest possible dissemination of informational, cultural, and educational materials, the Association urges the continuation of preferential postal rates to libraries. The legislative history of the Act creating the U. S. Postal Service authorizes and urges the Postal Rate Commission to establish a preferential library rate, even if such rate involves subsidization of service.

The Association deplores any severe increase in postage rates for second-class matter over those which obtained prior to the Act, since

this may lead to increases in subscription costs borne by libraries, and to the demise of many worthy publications.

Taxation

The Association believes it is in the public interest that libraries as educational institutions, and the distribution of educational, cultural, and scienific materials used by libraries, not be unjustly burdened by taxation. Libraries and library materials are already frequently given special treatment and exemptions in the tax laws of federal, state, and local governments. In the various studies of tax policy either under way or contemplated, the application of this principle should be extended further.

The Association favors an Internal Revenue Act with interpretive regulations that will encourage gifts of personal and business papers to libraries, thus providing valuable primary source material for research in many areas.

Standardization and Quality Control

In concert with other educational associations, the American Library Association supports federal efforts to insure quality control and standardization of technical equipment and products used by and serving libraries.

Copyright

The Association favors the passage of a United States copyright law that reflects changing techniques of communications and, at the same time, interposes a minimum of obstacles to the free distribution of ideas. Such a law should recognize that the fundamental constitutional purpose of copyright is to encourage creative endeavor and to protect the public interest.

Public Works

As a means by which library facilities may be extended and improved, the Association favors

the inclusion of library buildings in legislation providing for programs of community development and public employment.

Surplus Property

The Association supports the policy of permitting libraries, like other educational institutions, to receive both real and personal surplus property.

3 INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM

The Association holds intelluctual freedom to be indispensable to the preservation of those individual liberties and democratic institutions guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States. Free communication in every form through all media is the foundation of intellectual freedom. The Association's position in support of intellectual freedom is set forth in its officially adopted *Library Bill of Rights.*

The Association supports the principle of freedom of the press and the right and responsibility of the news media to keep the American people informed of the actions of their government. The Association condemns loyalty oaths as a condition of employment and investigations which permit the discharge of an individual without a fair hearing; the Association also condemns negative loyalty oaths as a condition of election or appointment of library trustees. In the interest of intellectual freedom it urges that serious consideration be given to the recommendations of the National Commission on Obscenity and Pornography.

4 INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

Librarianship is a profession that transcends national boundaries. Efforts by government and individuals to promote international understanding place upon U. S. librarians the obligation to inform themselves about international issues and to intensify their efforts to

promote understanding of international affairs. The American Library Association should continue its work with such international library groups as the International Federation of Library Associations and the International Federation for Documentation, with other national library associations, and with individual agencies and institutions abroad, assisting in the improvement of library services and librarianship.

United Nations

The Association supports participation by the United States in those programs of the United Nations and its specialized agencies which, in fulfillment of the objective of the UN Charter, relate significantly and constructively to books, reading, and libraries. In the interest of promoting the work of the UN and its specialized agencies, the Association encourages promptness both in publication of UN documents and in their distribution to libraries.

Unesco

The Association supports the principles of Unesco as stated in the Unesco constitution and endorsed by the government of the United States. Through its representation in the U. S. National Commission for Unesco and through the work of its various committees and individual librarians, the American Library Association seeks to implement the Unesco program in this country and abroad, particularly those aspects involving the development of library and bibliographic services throughout the world. It favors an adequate staff in the Department of State to facilitate this work.

The Association favors immediate implementation by the United States of the Florence Agreement (Agreement on the Importation of Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Materials) and the Beirut Agreement (Agreement for Facilitating the International Circu-

lation of Visual and Auditory Materials of an Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Character).

Organization of American States

The Association has long been active in programs for the improvement of library and bibliographic services in Latin America. It collaborates with the Library Development Program of the Organization of American States and favors strengthening the program to improve communication among the peoples of the Western Hemisphere.

International Exchange of Persons

The International Exchange of Persons program should be continued, and foreign visitors under the program should be given the opportunity to observe libraries in the country and to understand their contribution to American life. The exchange of librarians between this and other countries should be encouraged with government subvention to libraries and library schools for observation, study, and in-service training.

International Flow of Publications

The interchange of publications between the United States and other countries is essential for international understanding. A greater supply of books from abroad in American libraries should be encouraged by federal programs. Wide distribution of American publications abroad, subsidized with federal funds that would include expense of translations, should be given a high priority.

Improved exchange agreements for the flow of publications of all kinds (including official government documents) between American libraries and those abroad should be encouraged. Such exchange should be closely correlated with the projects of the Library of Con-

gress, the Smithsonian Institution, other research libraries, and the U.S. Book Exchange.

Customs Regulations

The easy importation of foreign books and other library materials for scholarly and research purposes and the continuance of customs policies which permit library materials to enter duty free under simplified customs regulations should be continued. (See also reference to the Florence and Beirut Agreements under Unesco.)

United States Libraries Abroad

To provide reliable information about the United States from diverse points of view, the Association encourages the federal government to provide adequate support for the establishment and maintenance of American information libraries abroad, staffed by experienced professional librarians. The Association favors the concept of a public-private mechanism that would assure the funding of such libraries as demonstrations of the way in which an American-style library can nourish the spirit of free inquiry.

International Copyright

The establishment of reciprocal copyright relationships with other countries through appropriate international arrangement such as the Universal Copyright Convention should be encouraged.

International Postal Policy

The United States international postal rates on educational and cultural materials should continue to be based on the optional provision in the Universal Postal Convention which permits reduced rates. The Association endorses proposals made by Unesco for the modification of the Universal Postal Convention to en-

courage wider and easier international distribution of educational and cultural materials.

Economic and Educational Development Programs

Federally funded programs to help developing countries achieve their educational goals should be continued and should include assistance in the formation and improvement of libraries and information services, the development of local publishing capabilities, and the bibliographic ordering of products of the nation's press.

5 EXISTING FEDERAL LAWS AFFECTING LIBRARIANS, LIBRARIES AND THEIR USERS

Agricultural Trade Development Assistance Act of 1954 (Title VII)	P. L. 83-480 as amended
American Revolution Bicentennial Commission	P L. 89-591 as amended
Appalachian Regional Development Act (Title II)	P. L. 89-4 as amended
Beirut Agreement (Joint Resolution to give effect to the Agreement for Facilitating the International Circulation of Visual and Auditory Materials of an Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Character, approved at Beirut in 1948)	P. L. 89-634
Civil Rights Acts of 1964	P. L. 88-352 as amended
Copyright Law (USC Title 17)	
Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act (Model Cities)	P. L. 89-754 as amended
Depository Library Act	P. L. 37-579 as amended
Drug Abuse Education Act of 1970	P. L. 91-527
Economic Opportunity Act	P. L. 88-452 as amended
Elementary and Secondary Education Act	P. L. 89-10 as amended
Emergency Employment Act	P. L. 91-54
Environmental Education Act	P. L. 91-516
Fair Labor Standards Act	P. L. 75-718 as amended
Federal Property and Administrative Services Act (Sec. 203 (j) (3))	P. L. 87-786 as amended
Florence Agreement (Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Materials Importation Act of 1966)	P. L. 89-651
Freedom of Information Act	P. L. 89-487 as amended

Higher Education Act	P. L. 89-329 as amended
Housing and Urban Development Act (Title VII)	P. L. 89-117 as amended
Intergovernmental Personnel Act	P. L. 91-648
Internal Revenue Code (USC, Title 26)	
Library of Congress Books for the Blind and Handicapped	P. L. 89-522
Library Services and Construction Act	P. L. 88-269 as amended
Manpower Development and Training Act	P. L. 87-415 as amended
Medical Library Assistance Act	P. L. 89-291 as amended
Mutual Education and Cultural Exchange Act	P. L. 87-256
National Commission on Libraries and Information Science	P. L. 91-345
National Defense Education Act (Title III)	P. L. 88-665 as amended
National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities Act (Secs. 12 and 13)	P. L. 89-209 as amended
Older Americans Act	P. L. 89-73
Public Works and Economic Development Act (Title I)	P. L. 89-136 as amended
Social Security Act	P. L. 89-97 as amended
State and Local Fiscal Assistance Act	P. L. 92-512
Vocational Education Act	P. L. 88-210 as amended

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